

DEPARTMENT OF INCLUSIVE LEARNING

STUDENT
SERVICES
TEAM



BTPS DEPARTMENT OF INCLUSIVE LEARNING

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"WHILE WE TRY TO
TEACH OUR
CHILDREN ABOUT
LIFE, OUR
CHILDREN TEACH
US WHAT LIFE IS
ALL ABOUT"

ANGELA SCHWINDT

Buffalo Trail Public Schools is committed to maximizing student learning for children and students with diverse learning needs in a safe and caring environment, supported by a highly effective team.

Inclusion is a way of thinking and acting that demonstrates universal acceptance and promotes a sense of belonging for all learners. Buffalo Trail Public Schools recognizes the need and the obligation to provide inclusive learning services and supports for all children and students.

Inclusion is not just about children and students with diverse learning needs. It is an attitude and approach that embraces diversity and learner differences and promotes equal opportunities for all learners.

Every child and student has unique and diverse learning needs. Some learners have profound and ongoing needs and others have short-term or situation-based needs. To have these diverse learning needs met it requires safe, caring, flexible and responsive learning environments that can adapt to the changing needs of learners.

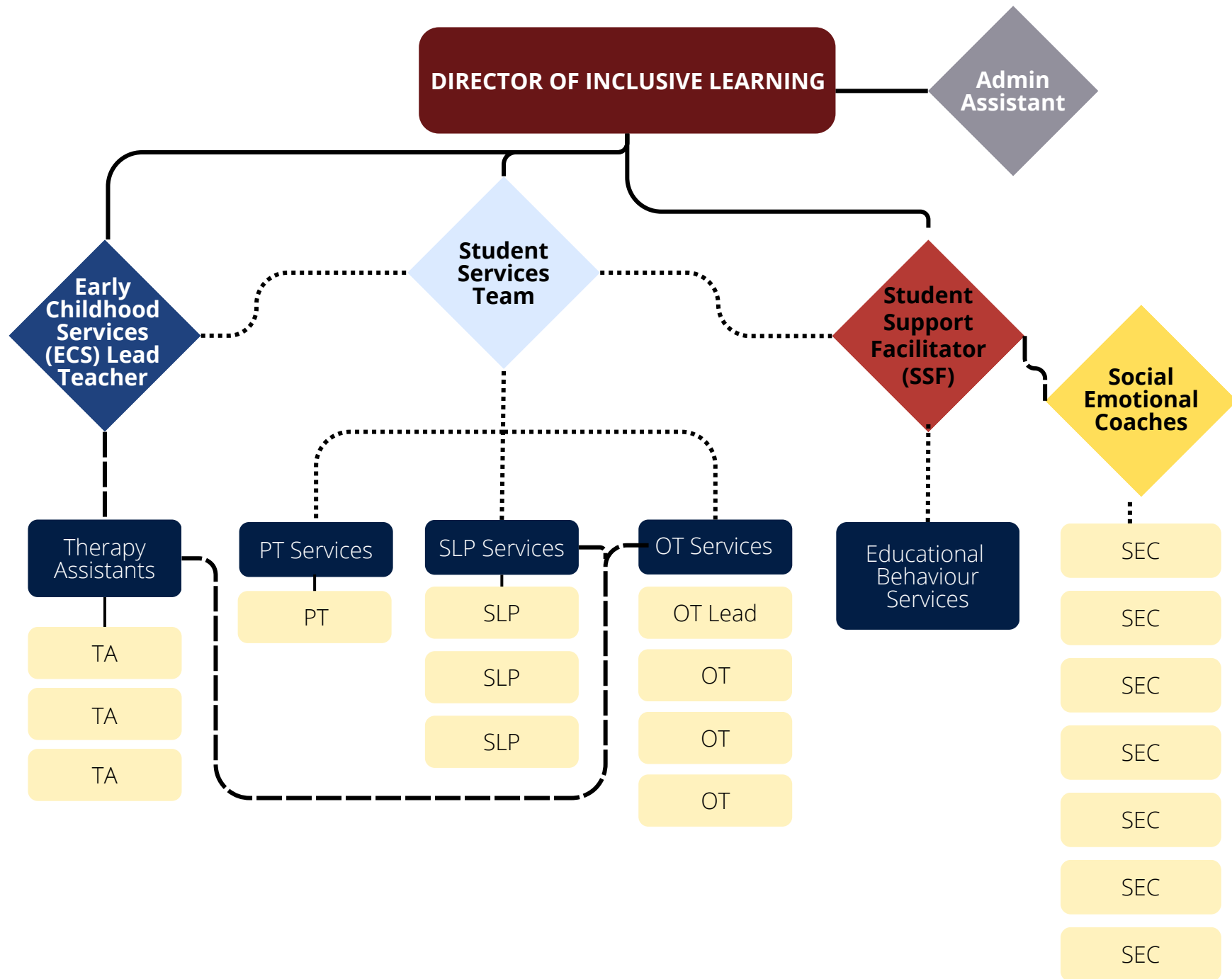
The Department of Inclusive Learning provides services and supports to children and students, staff and schools, in order to assist children and students in reaching their full learning potential in the most positive, effective, and supportive educational environments, using all available resources possible.

Contact Us

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BTPS Department of Inclusive Learning Organizational Chart





**MEET
OUR
TEAM**

CRYSTAL TOWER M.ED, B.ED

DIRECTOR OF INCLUSIVE LEARNING

Crystal has been on the BTPS team of educators for her entire career. She feels very fortunate to be and to have been mentored, coached, and encouraged to pursue her passion for children and youth through inclusive learning by the best team in the province. Crystal is proud that the BTPS Department of Inclusive Learning not only has a great team of hardworking, dedicated, and knowledgeable staff but also has a vast portfolio that includes

- Inclusive Learning
- Early Childhood Services
- English as an Additional Language
- Social-Emotional and Behavioural Supports
- Violence/Threat Risk Assessment
- Crisis Response
- And more

The Department of Inclusive Learning believes in “Supporting Everyone’s Success.” It is Crystal’s hope and belief that through creating awareness, understanding, and knowledge, we will be able to assist every child/youth to smile, feel safe and cared for, and reach their social-emotional and learning goals.



GAYLE HEDLEY
***ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR OF
INCLUSIVE LEARNING***

Gayle Hedley has worked with Buffalo Trail Public Schools for several years as the Administrative Assistant to the Director of Inclusive Learning. Her passion is assisting others, and her other passion is spending weekends with her family. As Administrative Assistant to the Director of Inclusive Learning, Gayle facilitates communication and information sharing within the Department of Inclusive Learning and between the department and outside agencies, ministries, and other BTPS departments. Gayle performs organizational and clerical tasks and handles various administrative requests from the Director of Inclusive Learning.



EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES (ECS) LEAD TEACHER

The Inclusive Learning–Early Childhood Services Lead Teacher coordinates services and supports to assist early learners in reaching their potential in the areas of language and communication, social-emotional, cognitive, self-awareness, environmental awareness, and physical development.



KJIRSTEN HOVELAND-WIGHT B.ED

EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES (ECS) LEAD TEACHER

Kjirsten works alongside other members of the Inclusive Learning team at BTPS in the role of the IL-ECS Lead Teacher. With over 20 years of experience in Buffalo Trail, including 18 years as a teacher and an additional 5 years specifically in Inclusive Learning, she feels very fortunate to be able to work with other members of the BTPS team who come with new and varied approaches to Inclusive Learning and greatly values the importance of wrap-around support for our early learners. Kjirsten works with children, families, staff, and service providers in all of the Early Childhood Services programs across BTPS.



STUDENT SUPPORT FACILITATOR (SSF)

The BTPS Student Support Facilitator provides services to all schools in BTPS through universal, targeted, and individualized guidance and consultation. This support enhances schools' capacity to improve student well-being, skill and knowledge development, motivation, and positive behaviour. The SSF collaborates with school staff and provides evidence-based recommendations, resources, strategies, and interventions.

The SSF may also facilitate professional development workshops for education staff and multi-disciplinary team members, co-lead in School Crisis Responses as well as provide consultation during school VTRAs.

The SSF provides direct supervision and facilitation of the BTPS Social-Emotional Coach program. This includes supporting social-emotional coaches in planning trauma-informed, student-centred, effective services for students requiring individualized support.



KARI THOMPSON, M.ED., B.ED.
BTPS STUDENT SUPPORT FACILITATOR

Kari is a dedicated education professional who is passionate about fostering child-centred school cultures where children and youth are fully supported in all areas of their growth and development. Kari values collaboration, diversity, and inclusivity and believes that healthy relationships are central to all successful work in education.

With a multidisciplinary Master's degree in Education from the University of Calgary, Kari's studies focused on child and youth mental health, educational neuroscience, and education research. Devoted to continuous professional and personal development, Kari maintains various certifications and has specialized training in trauma-informed practices, academic and behavioural interventions, child and youth counselling, child and youth development, and other areas of psychology.

Kari deeply appreciates the opportunity to lead the BTPS Social Emotional Coach Team and collaborate with the Inclusive Learning Services Teams. She looks forward to collaborating with Buffalo Trail Public Schools' professionals who are equally committed to student well-being and achievement.



OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Occupational Therapists (OTs) provide expertise and support to students, teachers, and other education professionals to enhance students' overall well-being and academic success. OTs collaborate with school teams to address students' functional needs to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

Occupational Therapists utilize their knowledge of anatomy, physiology, and developmental milestones to evaluate and assess a student's physical, cognitive, sensory, and emotional skills and environmental factors that may affect these. This information is used to develop individualized recommendations and strategies to support students' engagement and achievement in the school setting.

OTs provide guidance and training on strategies, modifications, and accommodations that can be implemented within the classroom to support a student's sensory processing/regulation, motor, self-care, life skill development, focus/attention, and organization.



CAMILLE BAILEY, M.SC.OT(C), B.ED
LEAD OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST/OWNER
SENSORY SOLUTIONS

After growing up in rural north-western Alberta, Camille graduated from the Master of Science in Occupational Therapy program at the University of Alberta in 2011 following the completion of her Bachelor of Elementary Education with a minor in Native Education in 2009, also at the U of A. She has worked as a pediatric OT both privately and publicly in various community settings (e.g., homes, schools, preschools, clinics, etc.) for over 10 years. Seeing an increasing number of children whose sensory processing difficulties were either misunderstood and/or inadequately addressed prompted Camille to seek out specialized post-graduate training in this area. Camille has a passion for all things continuing education and holds advanced training/certification in sensory integration, autism and FASD assessment, Indigenous education, culturally safe(r) rehabilitation practices, and printing/handwriting, just to name a few. Camille helps coordinate the OT services for BTPS, and could not be more thrilled to continue this collaborative partnership!



HEATHER ALESSIO, M.SC.OT(C), B.A. PSYCH ***REGISTERED OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST***

Heather completed her Bachelor of Arts through Grant MacEwan University in Edmonton, Alberta in 2012. While in university, she developed a passion for working with youth and individuals with diverse needs through her volunteer work and field placements in Edmonton. Inspired by the resiliency of individuals experiencing physical, social, and emotional challenges, she decided to continue her pursuit of finding a profession geared towards empowering others. In 2015, Heather graduated with her Master of Science degree in Occupational Therapy from the University of Alberta. She has continued her journey of working with children, youth, educators, and families in a variety of settings such as schools, childcare centres, preschools, and home environments. In addition, Heather enjoys fulfilling her interest in all things fun and creative through painting, crafting, and singing. Heather is very excited to be continuing with the BTPS team and to inspire each student's passion and growth while on their learning journey!



SHAYANNE (SHAY) CAIRNS, M.SC.OT(C) ***REGISTERED OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST***

Shay recently graduated with her Master of Science degree in Occupational Therapy, Indigenous Focus, from the University of Alberta in 2022 and has been working in schools ever since. She previously spent three years working as an Occupational Therapist Assistant in the school environment, preceded by several years working as a geologist. She grew up north of Westlock, Alberta and will always be a farm girl at heart. In her spare time she loves spending time with her partner and her pets on their acreage near Onoway, Alberta, riding horses, and being outdoors. Shay thoroughly enjoys working with students and their teams in an authentic and collaborative manner to build capacity for emotional and sensory regulation, body awareness, and other skills to maximize their functioning and self-confidence in the school environment. She is very excited to return to BTPS!



KAYLEE PYLYPOW, M.SC.OT(C), BPE/KIN **REGISTERED OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST**

Kaylee completed her Master of Science degree in Occupational Therapy through Glasgow Caledonian University in Scotland in 2022. She has previously worked for Alberta Health Services as a pediatric OT in a variety of settings (e.g., homes, clinics, and schools) and a research assistant investigating the correlation between childhood apraxia of speech and developmental coordination disorder.

Kaylee is passionate about working with children and has particularly enjoyed coaching youth of all abilities through Special Olympics, Challenger baseball, summer swim club and club volleyball. She enjoys supporting children to participate in their activities of daily living: education; play; self-care; and sensory processing. Her areas of interest include: emotional and sensory regulation; eating, feeding, and swallowing; and fine motor skill development. Kaylee brings a neuro-affirming approach to her practice as an OT, and she is eager to support the students and staff at BTPS.



SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) provide consultation and support to students, teachers, and other education professionals to improve communication skills and assist students in overcoming communication-related difficulties. SLP consultation involves targeting a student's unique communication needs and developing tailored support strategies and resources. SLPs gather information about a student's communication abilities and challenges through assessments. Interventions are then designed to address and overcome specific communication issues such as pre-language skills, social language skills, and phonological awareness, among others. SLPs develop and guide strategies, modifications, and accommodations that can be implemented within the classroom to support students' communication development, participation, and engagement.



CRYSTAL HECK, M.SC. R.SLP, S-LP (C) ***SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST***

Crystal graduated from the University of Alberta in 2011 with her Masters in Science- In Speech Language Pathology. Before that, she worked as a speech therapy assistant for a couple of years. Crystal has over ten years of experience in the field of speech and language services and has a passion for working with the pediatric population.

Crystal grew up in a small rural Alberta town and has worked in both the public and private sectors. When she is not working, she can be found working on her family farm south of Provost or chasing her two boys around to hockey or motocross.

Crystal is very excited to be in the school and helping meet the needs of the students in our division.



JENNIFER SCHULMEISTER, MSC-SLP, R.SLP, S-LP (C) ***SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST***

Jennifer graduated from the Master of Science in Speech- Language Pathology program at the University of Alberta in 2006, following completion of her Bachelor of Science with specialization in psychology. She has worked as a pediatric speech-language pathologist (SLP) privately and publicly (e.g., non-profit organizations, homes, clinics, schools) for over 15 years. Jennifer is passionate about providing supports to children who have complex communication needs, and she holds advanced certification in: assessment and implementation of augmentative communication systems, autism and FASD assessment, motor speech therapy, and literacy supports for young children and those with complex language needs. Jennifer strives to help every child discover their voice and she is thrilled to be a part of the BTPS team this year!



KAREN HOFF BARRON, M.SC. R.SLP, S-LP (C) ***SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST***

Karen Hoff Barron is the owner of Arise Therapy Services. Karen received her Master of Science degree in Speech-Language Pathology from the University of British Columbia and is certified through Speech and Audiology Canada (SAC). She has practiced in North Central British Columbia, Alberta, and has provided family-focused intervention via telehealth with the Ontario Autism Program. Karen has extensive experience providing a range of therapy services from infancy through adolescence in settings including schools, daycares, First Nations Head Start, pediatric community rehabilitation, and home settings. Karen has continued to pursue advanced training in areas including early intervention, autism spectrum disorder, executive functioning, literacy, and severe speech sound disorders. She also has extensive training, interest and experience working with children with complex communication needs (augmentative and alternative communication).



PHYSICAL THERAPY

Pediatric physical therapists are movement specialists, as it relates to children ages 0-18. They use their expertise and knowledge of motor development to provide appropriate interventions to promote optimal physical health and functional abilities. Physical therapists consult and work with children who have various physical conditions/diagnoses, injuries, or developmental delays that affect their movement, motor skills, and overall physical function. They may offer advice on appropriate school-based activities, home exercises, positioning, equipment, and strategies to support a child's physical development and maximize their participation in daily activities and routines. Physical therapists work closely with teachers and educational assistants to incorporate treatment goals into the school environment.



CANDRA SEXTON, B.SCPT

PHYSICAL THERAPIST

Candra is the owner of Adventure Awaits Pediatric Services and received her Bachelor of Science Physical Therapy (honors with distinction) through the University of Saskatchewan in 2002. She resides in rural Alberta and has developed the expertise and the competence necessary to provide high quality, family centered care for each of the families that she works with. She enjoys traveling to many rural communities and provides services to children in northern & central Alberta.

Candra has worked for over 20 years with children in a variety of pediatric settings including home, school, community, and clinic. She has extensive experience working with children with a variety of physical needs and collaborating with multidisciplinary teams to support them to their full potential; her philosophy of practice focuses on the belief that every child has the capacity to learn and grow no matter what challenges they may be facing. Relationship and trust with both the child and their support system holds high value in her professional practice.

On a more personal note, Candra has been given the beautiful opportunity to parent her daughter with complex disabilities. This has provided her with a unique perspective of both parent and therapist, particularly as it relates to inclusion and equitable access in all settings. Candra's motivation to provide quality services for the children that she works with combined with curiosity, empathy and understanding has given her a front row seat to seeing children achieve some incredible things!



THErapy ASSISTANTS

Our BTPS Therapy Assistants (TAs) support and assist licensed therapists, such as Occupational Therapists, Speech-Language Pathologists, and Physical Therapists. They work under the supervision and guidance of the therapists to help implement therapeutic interventions and facilitate the delivery of therapy services within the school setting. The TAs work closely with individual students or small groups, helping them engage in therapy exercises, practice skills, and participate in therapeutic activities as outlined in their treatment plans.



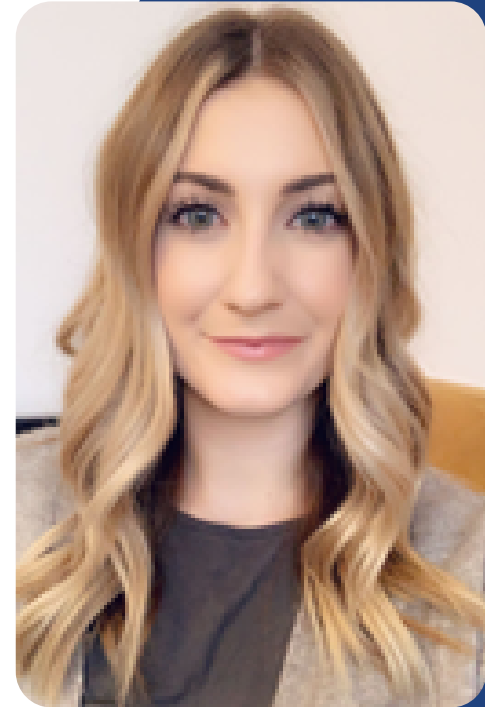
**TO BE DETERMINED
THERAPY ASSISTANT**



TAYLOR JOHNSON

THERAPY ASSISTANT

Taylor Johnson studied at Red Deer College where she obtained her Occupational and Physical Therapy Assistant Diploma in June of 2018. She started off her career providing therapeutic inpatient treatment to the adult and geriatric population with the DOAR program at the Daysland Hospital. Her next venture brought her to the Wainwright Home Care team to provide support to the clients of the community she grew up in. In February of 2021, she joined the Buffalo Trail Public School (BTPS) Inclusive Learning Department with the Student Services Team. Taylor has thoroughly enjoyed her switch to providing services to school aged children, and is grateful for the amazing support from our contracted professionals.



KENNEDY PROTSCH

THERAPY ASSISTANT

Kennedy Protsch graduated from the Occupational and Physical Therapy Assistant program at Red Deer Polytechnic in June 2023. She comes from the world of adult rehabilitation; she worked as a therapy aide at the Vermilion Health Centre while completing her diploma! Kennedy has experience working in acute care, long-term care, and home care. Kennedy is excited to start working in BTPS and support children in growing and meeting their goals!



SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL COACH (SEC) PROGRAM

The BTPS SEC program offers short-term sessions for students aimed at boosting skills and fostering a sense of empowerment to improve student well-being. Social Emotional Coaches provide students, their families, and school staff with goal-oriented social, emotional and behavioural support. SECs use researched-based, individual-centred, inclusive, and trauma-informed approaches to ensure all students who are receiving services are safe and supported in effective ways. The SEC team members provide additional support to BTPS schools as they are trained in VTRA (Violence Risk Threat Assessment) and suicide and self-harm intervention and serve as the BTPS Crisis Response Team.

In the case where students require support beyond the SEC program scope, SECs may support families in connecting them with appropriate services.



AMY BADRY OLOBAYO, B.A. (HONOURS) ***SOCIAL EMOTIONAL COACH***

Amy Badry Olobayo is the Social Emotional Coach for Mannville School, J.R. Robson and the Learning Hub. She has thirteen years experience working in the field of mental health and addiction with adults, youth and families. Amy has specialized training in motivational interviewing and trauma-informed care. She received her BA (honours) in Community Development and Dance from the University of Calgary. Amy enjoys incorporating art and movement into her practice as a way to embody social and emotional learning.

Amy was born in Vermilion and is grateful to come back to the community she was raised in to share her knowledge and skills and to build connections with families and students. She is a mother of two little ones. As a family, they enjoy being outside, dancing in the living room and making messy art projects.



JANET FLYNN, CD., B.A.IS.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL COACH

Janet is a returning Social Emotional Coach (SEC) for Wainwright High School, Wainwright Elementary School, and Irma School. Janet has a degree from the University of Manitoba, a Community Services Diploma working with people with addictions, a Lay Pastoral Ministry Formation Program certification, and she is currently a student in a Master of Counseling through City University. Janet intends to be a lifelong learner.

Janet is a retired Canadian Armed Forces member of 30+ years, and her family loves being in Wainwright. Her husband, Brian, is still serving, a 34-year member of the CAF, and they have two kids, Jenna and Dawson. Janet's stepdaughter, Jenna, and her husband- Matt are the parents of Brinley and Henry (Janet and Brian are proud grandparents!). Their son Dawson graduated in 2022; he is in his 3rd year at Lakeland College and is a running back in his third year with the CJFL Edmonton Wildcats. Janet and Brian live near Bevan's Park and enjoy walking their houseful of pets there. They are active with the WDMFA (football organization) and volunteer as much as possible in the community. Janet loves camping, photography and talking with students. Janet wishes everyone a wonderful school year!



JAYDEN HEINRICH B.SW., RSW.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL COACH

Jayden is excited to be working as the Social Emotional Coach for Vermilion Elementary School and Kitscoty High School. Jayden has a degree in Social Work and is a Registered Social Worker.

Jayden grew up in Vermilion and has lived here her whole life, despite moving to Edmonton for two years to complete her degree. Throughout the years, Jayden has had experience at the Brighter Beginnings Program, the Military Family Resource Centre, the Royal Alexandra Hospital, the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital, and a transitional housing program. Jayden has a passion for supporting others through a variety of challenging situations. She is looking forward to being back in rural communities working with students, families, and staff at Buffalo Trail Public Schools.

When Jayden is not working, she enjoys spending time with friends and family. Jayden loves to go for bike rides and walks outdoors. She also enjoys traveling, spending time at the lake, and playing with her small dog.

Jayden is eager to meet everyone and have a great year!



JOANNE FLATH, CLSC, CCPA **SOCIAL EMOTIONAL COACH**

JoAnne is very excited to continue in her role as a Social Emotional Coach (SEC). She will be working as an SEC at Marwayne Jubilee School, Dewberry School, and Innisfree Delnorte School. JoAnne looks forward to meeting with staff and students to add to their social-emotional awareness and overall well-being!

JoAnne is a Certified Life Skills Coach and has worked as a counsellor in the past. For the last couple of years, she has been facilitating Life Skills Programs, including Equine Therapy, during her Summer Months. JoAnne has a passion for helping others, especially in her local area.

When not working, JoAnne enjoys riding horses or hanging out with her family.



LEAH PAUL, B.A. PSYCH ***SOCIAL EMOTIONAL COACH***

Leah Paul is very excited to be back as a Social-Emotional Coach (SEC) and she cannot wait to meet with staff and students to add to their emotional awareness and overall well-being!

Leah has a degree in Psychology and has a passion for helping others, especially in the rural area where she was raised. When she is not working, she is usually found at the hockey rink or dance studio, cheering on her children alongside her husband. Leah also enjoys camping, travelling, reading, and enjoying time with her many pets.



REBECCA WATLING, B.A.CYC SOCIAL EMOTIONAL COACH

Rebecca Watling is excited to join you for this school year! She is looking forward to working as a Social Emotional Coach at Wainwright Elementary School, Wainwright High School, Dr. Folkins Community School, and E.H. Walter School! Rebecca has a degree in Child and Youth Counselling, and many years of experience in working with children, youth, and their families across many settings, such as family development and support, addictions, and child protection. Empowering children, youth, and families to set and achieve their goals while supporting their social, emotional, and relational well-being is her greatest passion!

When Rebecca is not working, you can find her spending time with her family, travelling, camping, enjoying nature, playing an instrument or creatively writing, reading, or snuggling with her cats!

Rebecca hopes that everyone has a wonderful year that is rich with opportunity, growth, and kindness!

“Believe you can and you’re halfway there” – Theodore Roosevelt



STACIE BAKKEN, B.A.HS.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL COACH

Stacie Bakken is very excited to be back working as the Social Emotional Coach (SEC) in Amisk, Provost, Hughenden and Edgerton. This year will be her 20th year with BTPS!

In 2004, Stacie began working as a casual Educational Assistant and this led her to further her education in working with children and youth that are struggling with social and emotional needs. Stacie has a diploma in Child and Youth Care Work and a Bachelor's Degree in Human Services. Working with children is her passion, and she cannot think of a better way to spend her time!

When Stacie is not working she enjoys spending time with her partner, Chris, and her children; Jaida, Drayton and Casey. Stacie was also very excited to have welcomed her first grandchild this fall! Stacie and Chris enjoy the mountains, kayaking, camping and traveling. Stacie looks forward to learning and growing with each and every one of you this school year!



Treaty Acknowledgement

Buffalo Trail Public Schools acknowledges that we are on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional meeting grounds, gathering place, and travelling route to the Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Métis, Dene, and Nakota Sioux. We acknowledge all the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit whose footsteps have marked these lands for centuries.



Vision

To be dynamic leaders in empowering students to be caring, responsible, and contributing global citizens with a passion for learning.



Values

- Demonstrate integrity and transparency
- Encourage innovation and collaboration
- Embrace diversity and belonging
- Provide opportunity and choice
- Celebrate success and recognize excellence
- Take ownership and exhibit accountability



BUFFALO TRAIL PUBLIC SCHOOLS IS COMMITTED TO MAXIMIZING STUDENT LEARNING, IN A SAFE AND CARING ENVIRONMENT, SUPPORTED BY A HIGHLY EFFECTIVE TEAM.